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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Identical letters dated 7 March 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement dated 5 March 2017 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the closure of the so-called crossing points in the occupied Abkhazia region.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 32, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kaha **Imnadze**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 7 March 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the closure of the so-called crossing points in the occupied Abkhazia region

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia condemns the closure of the so-called crossing points by the Russian occupation regime in the villages of Nabakevi and Otobaia in the Abkhazia region. It is noteworthy that, during 2016, the representatives of the occupation regime closed the so-called crossing points in the villages of Tagiloni and Lekukhona. On 5 March 2017, they abolished two more so-called crossing points along the occupation line.

This decision grossly violates the fundamental rights to freedom of movement, privacy and family life and access to education and health care for the local population, and serves to isolate the occupied Abkhazia region from the rest of the world. The decrease in the number of the so-called crossing points along the occupation line will aggravate an already difficult humanitarian situation in the Abkhazia region, especially the life of vulnerable groups, such as older persons, people in need of medical care or medical evacuation and schoolchildren, which will provoke further destabilization of the situation on the ground.

Despite clear-cut appeals by the international community, including the United Nations, the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the United States of America, Lithuania and Japan, it seems that the Russian occupation regime in Sokhumi made the decision to continue the destructive policy and to impede the peaceful conflict-resolution efforts of the Georgian Government.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs calls upon the Russian Federation to refrain from the provocative actions against Georgia, respect the fundamental principles of international law and the commitments taken under the European Union-mediated 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement and take a responsible approach to the prevention of an escalation of tensions on the ground.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs appeals to the international community to duly assess the tendency to close so-called crossing points and isolate the occupied regions and the so-called referendum to be held on 9 April in the Tskhinvali region, and to take effective measures with regard to Russia's illegal steps to undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia.